THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF EDUCATION AND CULTURE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI L. P. SHAHI): (a) and (b) A statement showing literacy rates according to censuses for the year 1961, 1971 and 1981 is enclosed. (See Appendix CXLIX. Annexure No. 172) Literacy data for 1988 is not available as the census is held after a gap of 10 years and the next census is due in 1991.

(c) Although the percentage increase in the literacy rate of SCs/STs is faster than that of general category yet the gap still exists there. The Government has taken up a number of programmes like National Literacy Mission (NLM) and non-formal system of education for the coverage of illiterate population with special stress of SCs/STs. Apart from this reservation provision for these communities has been made in the Navodaya Vidyalayas. The Govt. of India has a scheme of scholarships in Approved Residential Secondary Schools, opening of Ashram Schools exclusively for SCs/STs, central assistance to the States for construction of hostels and providing various types of scholarships including compulsory scholarships and the special scholarships for the children whose parents are engaged in unclean occupations, etc. The incentives mainly include the free distribution of text-books and stationery. Book Bank Scheme for loaning books for the children of SCs/STs, free distribution of uniforms and mid-day meals to increase the retention of children in schools so as to equalise the literacy position.

Opening of Institutes to Promote the Education of Science

3232. SHRI YALLA SESI BHUSHANA RAO: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) what is the number of colleges, out of 5700 colleges which are equipped to impart Science education, which can compare favourably with the standards in the industrially advanced countries; and

(b) whether Government have any plans to start more institutes similar to the Indian Institute of Sciences, Bangalore and IITs to attract students?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF EDUCATION AND CULTURE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI L. P. SHAHI): (a) The information regarding the number of colleges imparting science education at the undergraduate level is not available. However, though there would be scope for improvement in standards in many cases, the courses and programmes in the Sciences offered by the Colleges in India compare favourably with those offered in the developed countries. The University Grants Commission has taken various measures to improve the standards in higher education, including science education in colleges. These include prescribing minimum standards of instruction for grant of first degree in various subjects including science, scheme of college Science Improvement Programme (COSIP) to bring about qualitative improvement in the teaching of science subjects at the undergraduate level.

(b) The Government is setting up an Indian Institute of Technology in Assam which would be sixth in the country.

Work-load at Hyderabad Base

3233. SHRI YALLA SESI BHUSHANA RAO: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the work load at Hyderabad base was depleted from 23,116 flying hours in 1985 to 10,000 flying hours in 1988;